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ABSTRACT

A historical survey of the literature and research on values and value measurement is presented. Various approaches to value study such as the Allport-Vernon-Lindsey model and the work of Adorno, et al in "The Authoritarian Personality" are discussed and analyzed. The author suggests that the models set forth in these works are not sensitive enough to catch the present subtleties of value structure and change on our college campuses. In addition, special emphasis is given to recent attempts to define and assess college student values and value change with comments on the efforts of Keniston, Wheelis, and Rokeach. Finally, the author presents a conceptual model of values and their relationships to the belief and attitude systems of Rokeach and show how this conceptual model is related to the development of the College Student Value Questionnaire, an instrument for measuring contemporary college student values. (Author/MA)

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College Student Values: An Historical and Conceptual Perspective

APGA 1971 - Atlantic City

William E. Martin

I would like to orient my remarks toward an historical and conceptual review of values and value change within the college culture by focusing primarily on related developments during the past decade. Hopefully, it will become evident from these comments why a more discriminating approach to value study is needed and also justify to some extent our present effort with the College Student Value Questionnaire. Several persons have strongly influenced the essence of this paper; including Milton Rokeach, Allen Wheelis, Kenneth Kensiton and Nevitt Sanford.

Events in the past ten years or so have without question shaken the beliefs, attitudes and values of our society and in particular contemporary youth on college campuses. A few of these events which have occurred to me include:

a) the demonstrations of students against the House Un-American Activities Committee in San Francisco in 1961.

b) the emergence of the Students for a Democratic Society or SDS.

c) the emergence of the Student Non-Violent Coordinations Committee or SNCC.

d) student sit ins.

e) student participation in voter registration.

f) civil rights marches.

g) demonstration against discriminations in hiring.

h) the demonstrations at Berkeley of the Free Speech Movement.

While many other events can no doubt be recalled, the handwriting on the wall was clear to all. Gone was the traditional puritan ethic of

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peaceful tolerance. A new consciousness was emerging from the throes of this humanitarian revolution, a new quest for identity was visible on the horizon. At the same time, these changes have been difficult to observe and analyze coherently by social psychologists and related personnel. There seemed to be a new ethic, a new morality, but Everyman, U.S.A. was claiming his analysis of the college scene was the accurate and final one. Yet a high degree of diffusion and confusion existed.

Allen Wheelis, a practicing therapist, suggested that modern man had outgrown his old identity but had regained a new level of consciousness. He depicted the old social and personal identity as a log cabin on the frontier with a small, dark but sturdy structure. He contrasted this example with that of the new identity represented as a builder who fumbles along hoping to turn his job over to a professional architect and whose working materials are more diverse than the log cabin. The final product would be a more unique and complicated structure, and one admitting more light and air and with more space for living.

Wheelis also observes the diffused state of affairs with regard to value structure and change, and notes that in some measure we have lost our sense of continuity with the past and future.

Other writers like Keniston and Sanford to cite only two, have identified the personality and value orientations of additional subcultures resulting from the activist movements and social and cultural changes in the past decade. The alienated student, the non-conformist, the intellectual, the humanitarian are but a few examples of the personalities that have been identified and studied in some detail.

It is doubtful to me that the existing repertoire of value surveys and questionnaires and especially the Allport-Verson-Lindsley Study of Values

alluded to in Dr. Powell's paper, are sensitive and discriminating enough to catch the present subleties of value structure and change on our college campuses. Spranger's six types consisting of theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious factors capture some of the basic orientations of the larger society, but the wording and essence of the questions in the Study of Values leaves much to be desired with regard to the college population. Can such labels separate the activist from the wheeler-dealer personality? Moreover, what are the behavioral characteristics associated with these value types?

It must be admitted that some authors maintain that the value structure of college students has remained remarkably stable by comparison to society as a whole. In a well known study by Jacob, he observes that college students still value the traditional moral values and the Protestant virtues of honesty, sincerity and absolutism while being gloriously contented, self-centered and religious. He suggests further that students are dutifully responsive toward government but will take little role in politics, government or public affairs. They also place a great premium on vocational preparation. Other authors argue that little value change can be attributed to the college environment. They have frequently employed traditional instruments like the Study of Values cited earlier as a basis for their conclusions.

In answer to those who maintain that values are status quo ante bellum, that is, have not changed drastically in the last 10 years, I would like to call your attention to what Nevitt Sanford has astutely predicted of the college student - 1980. He points out that a large portion of society will be moving in the direction pointed to by the activist movement. There will be a greater diversity of students entering college in the 1980's, and increased tension generated within the university environment itself will contribute to value change. Greater radicalism resulting from an alternating

reaction to conservatism leading to even more extreme positions will emerge. Vocational orientation will be directed toward social and psychological employment rather than materialistic placements in the Establishment. Thus, there will be a decrease in career choices in areas like business, science and engineering and a movement toward teaching, government, the ministry and so on. According to Sanford, activism on the college campus of the next decade will constitute a major social movement and the predominant value orientation of the college population may well be expressed in this manner. Moreover, the emergence of social and humanitarian issues such as the draft, drug use and abuse, sex standards and the present job market have already added thrust to these changes. Whether these issues are merely fads of the time or will play a lasting effect on value change or not is not certain. Certainly, greater attention must be directed to the value changes and their relationship to such areas as curriculum and teaching efforts.

Recent evidence is accumulating from several sources to challenge the long held belief that core values are a permanent product of the early childhood days and become frozen during this period. The Coleman Report has revealed that core values can be changed and modified greatly by peer group influences. Supporting this view, Urie Brofenbrenner has explicitly stated in an article entitled, "The Split Level American Family", that the family is playing a much less significant role in determining core values for their children because of the dissolution of a close neighborhood bond that kept the value lid from being uncorked.

A more promising attempt to deal with the value issue has been the research of Clark and Trow. These researchers have delineated four sub-cultures of college student orientations within the college environment. They label these groups as the academic, the vocational, the collegiate and the non-conformist. Characteristic of the academic sub-culture is an

overriding seriousness of purpose toward studies at the expense of other facets of campus life. The vocationally oriented student is diploma bound and materialistic. The collegiate personality is socially minded and is usually a member of a sorority or fraternity. He is also concerned with dating, campus fun and student activities. The non-conformist student is typically anti-system, but a seeker of greater meaning and more humanitarian in philosophy than any of the other groups. Whether he is activist or alienated is a moot point. This approach is more in line with our own thinking about value orientations, but we feel that more sub-groups can be defined than these four categories studied by Clark and Trow.

So much for some historical background.

I would like to devote the remainder of this paper to relating values to other similar constructs such as beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies relative to the college scene. This is significant because it may make our present methodological considerations more apparent and relevant. Moreover, it may give the results we obtain greater validity in the light of previous comments on value change and sub-cultural factors.

A most timely epistle on the nature and scope of values by Allan Wheelis relates values to the identity crisis by suggesting that they determine goals which in turn determine identity. Furthermore, goals are achieved by sustained and purposeful activity rather casual and random activity. They also involve choice, that is, selecting and picking activities than have a "better than" quality to them than others.

A real need exists for organizing values in some systematic way, so that empirical results can be more accurately interpreted. Wheelis proposes that values be organized in a hierarchy with religious, ideological and philosophical codes at the top of the hierarchy. He argues that these values rule over all other values and resolve all value conflicts. Identity

crises and conflicts in goals, therefore, originate from these sources. The values at the top of the hierarchy are referred to as institutional values and can be contrasted to instrumental values in that instrumental values are the tools or means for achieving ultimate goals and institutional values. A similar organizing structure has been formulated by Milton Rokeach. He maintains that values have to do with modes of conduct and end states of existence and represent a type of belief centrally located in a belief system about how one ought or ought not to behave or about some end state of existence worth or not worth attaining. At this point, I would like you to take a look at the handout you received which represents my adaptation of how values fit into the belief and attitude system and their interdependence on each other and other factors.

Let me first define a belief as a simple proposition having a descriptive or evaluative label to it. For example, the statement, "the sun rising in the east"is a descriptive statement. Or, "ice cream is good" is an example of an evaluative belief. And so on.

An attitude is related to a belief in that it is considered to be a package of beliefs about an object or situation that are true or false and desirable or undesirable. Attitudes have one additional characteristic. They predispose one to act or respond in a preferential way.

An ideology is an organization of beliefs and attitudes similar to Wheelis' conception in that they include religious, political and philosophical elements and are located at the top of the hierarchy in the value-attitude system. Moreover, they are shared with others and are commonly derived from external authority.

At this point let me try to relate values to the other elements in this hierarchy by differentiating them from attitudes, which are frequently and incorrectly treated as values. A value is typically a single belief that

guides actions and judgements across specific objects and situations and beyond immediate goals to more ultimate states of existence. On the other hand, an attitude consists of several beliefs focusing on a specific object or situation such as civil rights, abortion or the draft. In addition, a value is like a trigger to action, that is, it impels one to act in a preferential manner. Finally, a value is distinct from an attitude in that it serves as a standard or yardstick to guide actions, attitudes, comparisons, evaluations and justifications of the self and others.

Rokeach divides values into two categories which are noted on the handout under value system: 1) instrumental values or those which induce us to act upon the environment and 2) terminal values or those representing an abstract ideal of considerable importance to us. He uses two separate adjective lists to assess instrumental and terminal values respectively.

Several justifications for assessing values rather than beliefs, attitudes or ideologies may now be apparent to you from the above comments. First, it can be seen that values possess a strong motivational component that may result in an overt act. Second, values determine attitudes as well as behaviors. Rarely, if ever, can attitudes determine values. Moreover, there are probably a much larger number of attitudes than values which suggests that values provide a more economic tool for assessment. Finally, values have meaning across many disciplines while attitudes are generally restricted to social and psychological issues.

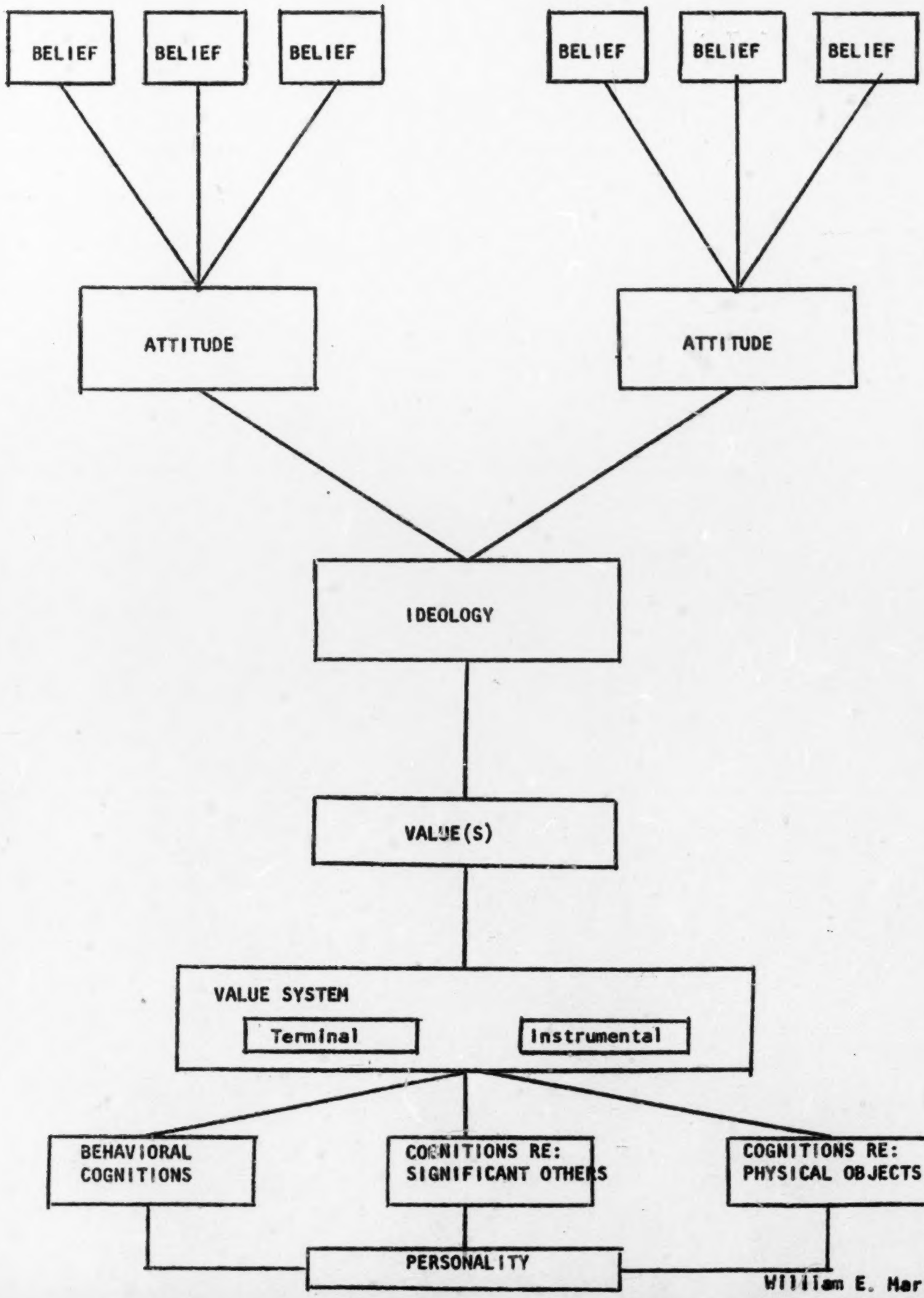
Feeding into this system to make it more palatable with our own notions from the value study are three additional factors. First is the belief a person may have about his own commitment to behaviors. Second, are his feelings about the attitudes, values, motives, and behavior of those close to him or significant others. Third, are his thoughts about the behavior of physical objects.

Of considerable import for our work with the value questionnaire is the identification of the student's value system. Implicit in this construct is a rank ordering of values along some continuum of importance to the student. Thus, out of the thirteen value dimensions, we hope to obtain a rank ordering of values among them and conceivably be able to partition out terminal values from instrumental ones. Further, we hope to identify a motivational orientation, either a predominantly cognitive one or an affective one as well as specific behavioral activities pointing to a particular pattern. Finally, a general personality profile could emerge that would be directly related to the value system within which each person operates. Comparing behavioral indices with the instrumental and terminal values could provide interesting data on college student sub-cultures. Rokeach has demonstrated on several occasions that a contradiction exists between certain terminal and instrumental values, but has not described how they relate to separate value orientations.

One of the potent features of studying values particularly with today's college population is the fact that they can be changed and remain changed over a long period of time. If our instrument is discriminating enough, we should be able to determine what changes occur during the college experience and also what particular dimensions are more changeable versus those that are resistant.

In conclusion, my hope is that these results will contribute something to alleviate the confusion that presently exists about the value structure of students in our colleges and universities, much of which has been responsible for considerable misunderstanding and scapegoating of certain sectors within the college environment.

STRUCTURE OF THE VALUE-ATTITUDE-BELIEF SYSTEM (ADAPTED AND MODIFIED FROM BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND VALUES BY MILTON ROKEACH. SAN FRANCISCO: JOSSEY-BASS, 1968.)



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